



Research and Reference Service

OVERSEAS REACTION TO THE CUBAN SITUATION
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West European comment on the Cuban crisis remains voluminous with continuing support for the United States.

There is a tendency to broaden the view to embrace Europe's special interest. The German press continues to link Cuba to the Berlin situation and there is a belief that protracted negotiations are about to begin on Berlin, foreign bases, disarmament and nuclear testing.

In Britain the Guardian praises President Kennedy again for "the decisive action he took and for his readiness to be conciliatory to end it.... He has forced the Russians to retreat for the first time in 16 years." The paper recommends a pledge that the West will never be the first to use nuclear weapons.

The suggestion that Turkish bases be abandoned in exchange is still an issue in some of the Free World press, but in the Soviet Bloc it does not occupy a prominent place in propaganda output.

The Japanese press turned to other subjects today.

Peking was still going strong on Cuba, trying to sell the idea that this is a confrontation of Cuba and the United States. Today's editorial, the strongest so far, presents a thinly veiled attack on the Soviet pullout. The paper endorses Castro's five settlement points including withdrawal from Guantanamo. NCNA went as far as to point out Moscow's confusion and inconsistency by quotes on that subject from Pierre Salinger.

From the Soviet Bloc, the word comes that the United States should now do its part for solution of the Cuban crisis. The Soviet Union is portrayed as the great peacemaker.

African comment, now coming in, indicates that the African press is giving much of the credit for the easing of tension to the Soviet Union. The Africans are demanding reciprocal concessions from the United States in terms of abolished bases.

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Latin American support for the U.S. and OAS approach continues very strong. An exception is Brazil which has assigned itself the role of mediator. Cuba continues to take an independent stand in defiance of the Soviet offer and the U.S. agreement. Castro probably is trying to save his image in the Hemisphere by insisting that he will not accept an international solution which does not recognize his demands.

WESTERN EUROPE

The West European comment was voluminous and generally pro-US. This was mixed with comment on linking Cuba to problems of more direct European interest.

The liberal Guardian once had a critical attitude but its shift reflects the growth of British press support in the light of U.S. success. "Events have justified Mr. Kennedy's toughness," the paper states. It also calls on the Western Alliance to participate in nuclear policy and to announce that it will never use nuclear weapons first.

The French press calls the Khrushchev pledge a great personal victory for the President and a consequent defeat for Khrushchev. Nearly all of the papers express admiration for the adroitness with which the United States outmaneuvered the Soviet Union. One source states some of the praise was almost embarrassingly over-enthusiastic in praising the "young President's" action. There was also appreciation of the "wise policy" of not humiliating Khrushchev by boasting and of the role of the U.N.

Further French comment indicated a belief that the Soviets now are less likely to pressure Berlin. Some editors expect a Kennedy-Khrushchev meeting before the end of this year.

The German press headlines the United Nations preparation to supervise the withdrawal of missiles from Cuba.

The Tagesspiegel, independent, Berlin, said both Washington and Moscow expect a detente over Cuba to be the beginning of a long series of East-West conference on all major international problems. The paper said there are indications the U.S. will seek security against indirect threats of aggression which are constantly emanating from the Castro regime. It adds that the U.S. will not do anything that might guarantee Castro's political future.

The Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, right center, questioned whether Khrushchev is prepared to accept controlled disarmament elsewhere than Cuba.

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Berlin Mayor Willy Brandt was interviewed on the West German radio. He reflected the continuing German concern over any connection between Cuba and Berlin and predicted that his city would again be on the international agenda.

The independent Koelner Stadt-Anzeiger, Cologne, scolds the Germans for claiming victory when "we are at best trainbearers of a world power." It drew the moral that "only a politically unified Europe, including Britain, will prevent us from slipping into provincialism."

The Neue Zuercher Zeitung of Zurich, independent, said "The American republics may perhaps take further steps to isolate Castro's Cuba more efficiently than before, and arm themselves against subversive attempts at infiltration."

In Switzerland, the Gazette de Lausanne, liberal, said that "Khrushchev's disengagement will certainly breed resentment with the Cubans and will surely reinforce their friendship for the Chinese."

CHINA

Communist China makes a thinly veiled attack today on Khrushchev's decision to withdraw its rocket bases from Cuba in its latest editorial in the official Party paper People's Daily. The editorial underscores the fact that it is the Cuban people who are "heroic," for they have stood firm against all threats and intimidations from the United States. The editorial endorses Castro's five points as "fully justified and absolutely necessary."

The editorial also takes a direct jab at Khrushchev when it notes that Sunday's Kennedy-Khrushchev exchange of letters contained an American pledge to lift the blockade and guarantee against an invasion of Cuba. But in the next sentence, the editorial charges: "Instead of removing its naval blockade of Cuba, the United States is now intensifying its military preparations for an invasion of that country."

As it has in previous comment, Peking stresses the defense of the Cuban revolution and pledges the support of the Chinese people.

Other propaganda from Peking stresses U.S. preparations to invade or establish pretexts for invasion of Cuba, including a commentary yesterday, charging invasion preparations at Guantanamo.

FAR EAST

The Cuban crisis has now largely been displaced from the front pages and editorial columns of the Japanese press. Leading comment from Tokyo evening papers yesterday, however, has appeared on the Japanese radio. It quotes Mainichi that the Soviet Union still has a base in the Western Hemisphere from which propaganda can now be disseminated with complete immunity. Yomiuri is the source for the opinion that with the pull-back of Soviet missile bases from Cuba, the United States will find it more difficult to resist Soviet pressures on Turkey and West Berlin.

In an October 30 press conference, Japanese Premier Ikeda praised the U.S. actions in the crisis as "good" for they avoided war and brought about "a regional settlement." He noted that any arguments as to the legality of blockade were rendered obsolete "as soon as the Organization of American States approved" it. The press conference was published in the Tuesday evening papers.

A rash of comment on Cuba in Tuesday's Rangoon papers produced a wide range of opinion. The English-language Nation observed that the Cuban crisis proved again that strength, military preparedness and resolution to "go whole hog" are the decisive factors in a showdown with the Communists. The anti-Communist, Burmese-language Mogyo declared that Khrushchev was caught red-handed. Leftist and Communist papers stressed Khrushchev's peace-maker role and crowed over the U.S. promise not to invade Cuba.

Ten Rangoon papers carried USIS-distributed pictures of the missile bases in Cuba, while the text of Khrushchev's October 28 letter to Kennedy appeared in three papers, in bought space.

Cambodia's first official word on the crisis was published in the Neak Chiet Niyum, official organ of Sihanouk's party, on Sunday. In a lead editorial, the paper said it was opposed to the American stand in Cuba, just as it had opposed the Soviet intervention in Hungary in 1956. As previous comment from Cambodia had indicated, principal objection was made to U.S. offensive bases all over the world, an observation also echoed in the Meatophum. The Neak Chiet Niyum also gave the victory in the crisis to the Soviet Union which "purely and simply won the battle" by turning its ships around to permit negotiations, where it "inevitably has the initiative."

SOVIET BLOC

Emerging commentary expands on the "victory-for-reason" theme. It reflects the USSR's love for peace, but still does not overpraise Khrushchev for his role during this crisis.

At the same time, Moscow is beginning to call increasingly for U.S. moves to honor its commitments. Soviet propaganda takes it for granted that Moscow is as good as its word, yet injects doubts that current U.S. behavior is moving in the same direction. One commentator, after remarking that the U.S. blockade of Cuba has not ended, that there is still a naval buildup, and that SAC continues to be on the alert, adds: "I would like to hope that the U.S. Government will understand the danger from this course, will draw the necessary conclusions from the events of last week, and will soon not in words but in deeds, take the path of easing tension, the path of consolidating world peace."

An Izvestiya editorial yesterday is the most authoritative comment available so far. It is built around a portrayal of how the Soviet Union has moved to protect a world peace threatened by "hostile, adventurist designs against the very existence of the Cuban Republic." The Soviets have achieved their goal, Izvestiya says. There are some indications in the editorial that the formation of Soviet policy decisions during the Cuban crisis elicited domestic and Bloc criticism. The editorial insists that the "course of events demonstrated that the far-sighted and wise course of the Soviet Government was the only correct one in the situation which had developed...." (Emphasis added) A little further on, this time as if addressing itself to Albania and the CPR, Izvestiya says: "Life demonstrates the efficacy of the method of peaceful settlement of conflicts by way of talks, and not by the use of weapons or by military force."

For the first time, in a domestic broadcast, Moscow also endorses, in general, Castro's demand for the evacuation of Guantanamo. Having mentioned all of his demands, the commentator says that "implementation of the measures put forward by the head of the Cuban Government, as any sensible person can see, would be instrumental in normalizing the situation in the Caribbean."

There are also attempts being made to show that the Cubans, having won a reprieve on "socialist" life, will continue to get unspecified Soviet support. One atypical comment points out, however, that armed assistance will now no longer be required to Cuba. But an interesting TASS despatch, by quoting a British Labor M. P., has Moscow making a highly unusual admission. According to the M. P., the "overriding objective" achieved by Soviet actions "was and remains the guarantee of the territorial integrity of a communist state near the borders of the U.S."

Expressions of approval for Soviet "peace" policy continue to come from the Bloc. Mingled in are expressions of relief at the resulting lessening of tensions. There are also faint echoes that the policy choice -- which might have involved Warsaw Pact planning -- did not please all those making it.

Prague, for instance, reports: "Earlier there appeared many rash views that the Soviet ships, regardless of the situation and its development, ought to sail through at any price at once. I repeat: at any price and at once."

From Poland comes one of the very rare Communist attempts to link Berlin to the Cuban crisis. Trybuna Ludu, the party organ, speaks first about the advantage of negotiating away East-West differences, and then refers to such topics as the U.S. bases in Turkey and the problem of West Germany.

Rumania is the only Satellite echoing the single Soviet reference to no more arms for Cuba, saying that the "defensive purpose" of arming the country is no longer necessary in the light of American guarantees.

LATIN AMERICA

Continued strong Latin American support is reflected in the media of the Hemisphere. La Prensa of Argentina declared that Communist imperialism took a step back because it was intimidated by U.S. superiority.

La Prensa of Managua, Nicaragua declared in an editorial under the heading: "Myth of Non-Intervention" that "the blockade of Cuba [had been] carried out with agreement of all American states, [and] is giving the lie most emphatically to those who believe that non-intervention should be an untouchable and sacrosanct international dogma."

The Foreign Minister of Guatemala told the press in Guatemala City that the basic situation facing Latin America has changed little for Castro will persist in his efforts to subvert constitutional governments. These comments add to the growing call from the American nations for direct intervention in Cuba against the "Castro régime," which they are calling a "puppet" of Moscow.

Public reaction in Brazil, still ahead of the official position, strongly supports the U.S. Large wall posters appeared yesterday with President Kennedy's picture which proclaimed: "Hail Kennedy, Defender of the Americas."

Premier Hermes Lima's remarks carried by the national radio network from Rio de Janeiro, were that Cuba will not be invaded because "the word of President Kennedy promising not to invade Cuba is sufficient." (This may suggest that Brazilian officialdom is being more heavily influenced by growing public support of the U.S. A similar line was heard once from Moscow and from Rumania.)

In Chile, a UPI dispatch insinuates that pro-Castro materials found in a Santiago apartment were "introduced through the Cuban Embassy" and press reports indicated that "Cuban elements" went often to the apartment. Security forces in Chile continue to exercise considerable control over terrorist activities. There is more talk that Chile should break diplomatic relations with Cuba.

CUBA

In Cuba, Premier Castro still insists that his conditions be met independently of any agreement which may be made by others. Revolution of Havana declared that if the U.S. Government is sincere about giving Cuba a guarantee against invasion "it must begin by dismantling all the gigantic, criminal machinery set up to attack our people." A television commentator added his bit to the status quo ante theme by announcing that despite the blockade "the Soviet merchantmen have kept coming to our country." Havana Radio credited Secretary General U Thant for the lifting of the U.S. blockade.

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AFRICA

African comment is continuing to evaluate the Cuban settlement in terms "of extending peace" which demand the abolition of additional military bases -- particularly Guantanamo. Available comment from Nigeria and Ethiopia credit the outcome largely to the USSR. Senegal credits the UN and the neutral nations. The latter areas plus Ghana are playing up the need for reciprocal concessions from the U.S. -- particularly in the case of Guantanamo.

The Ghanaian Times asks for the abolition of all third country bases particularly Guantanamo and calls on the Turkish government to sever its military links with foreign governments.

Lagos Radio reviews three Nigerian papers which praise the role played by the USSR and call on the U.S. to demonstrate "in no uncertain terms" that it is not the warmongering party. The Daily Telegraph (Independent) praises Khrushchev's "statesmanship" and thinks the U.S. should dismantle its military bases surrounding the Soviet Union. The Morning Post says "the Americans should not think that what they have done has contributed in any way to world peace." The Daily Express describes Khrushchev as "statesmanlike" -- "courageous" -- "clever" in establishing a USSR position both "powerful" and "reasonable" so as to force future U.S. concessions.

The Voice of Ethiopia (semi-official) and the Ethiopian Herald (Government), both divide credits for the settlement between the USSR and the UN. Ethiopian radio and press are playing up the Castro demands for the dismantlement of Guantanamo.

Senegalese comment (Dakar Radio) says the crisis was settled largely by the UN and the neutral nations.

NEAR EAST AND SOUTH ASIA

The Near East and South Asia, taking time out from local preoccupations to assess the outcome of the Cuban crisis, was generally in a magnanimous mood, giving the U.S. a political, the Soviets a moral victory. Both the President and Khrushchev received their share of the credit for averting a nuclear war. Most praise for the firm U.S. handling of the situation came from its NATO allies, Greece and Turkey, and from Cyprus. Khrushchev received the lion's share of the credit in the Arab World for his "courageous" decision to avert war. South Asian reactions were mixed, praise and blame being lavished on both parties. Khrushchev's confession that a Soviet missile base did exist in Cuba made the greatest impact in the non-Arab Middle East and in South Asia but remained largely unmentioned in the Arab states. Some media in the area expected further "unexpected" developments, and the Indian press warned that the U.S. would have to let Khrushchev save face at home.

The press in the Arab states--especially the UAR, Syria and Iraq--assigned most of the credit for averting war to themselves, and told the nonaligned states that it was their responsibility to keep watch over "Kennedy and his allies so as not to let them jeopardize peace opportunities, as in the past." The U.S. was told it was its turn to dismantle bases.

Lebanese media remained divided, but the larger proportion of comment favored the U.S. Some pro-UAR papers, however, termed the resolution of the crisis "a triumph of reason over brute force." Lebanon was the only Arab state in which media pointed out that Khrushchev had been able to dispose of the Cuban missile base without first consulting the Cubans.

In South Asia both the President and Khrushchev were credited with having contributed to the easing of tension. The incident was, however, interpreted as an American success and a Soviet defeat, at least in political terms. Khrushchev received credit for "statesmanship," which had "impressed Kennedy himself," although the Soviet Union was discredited to some extent for having lied about the missiles. Both sides were said to have given evidence that they desired peace.

As for the future, an Indian paper predicted that Russia would insist upon American withdrawal from Turkey. Another paper, Amrita Bazar Patrika of Calcutta, said, however: "Dr. Castro's demand for the removal of the U.S. Naval Base, though justified on principle... looks somewhat bizarre in the face of his deal with Soviet Russia in respect of the installation of Russian missile sites in his country."

Interest in U. S. installations in Turkey increased sharply in Turkish media and the Cuban situation continued to dominate press coverage. The Greek press warned that no one could any longer trust Communist assurances after their obvious lies about the missile bases in Cuba, no matter how official and categorical these assurances might be.

One Greek daily, opposition paper Ethnos, wrote: "Soviet bad faith has become so traditional, that new and unexpected developments or tedious negotiations involving great mental strain on the adversary cannot be ruled out."